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ABSTRACT

This document is the result of a national Mainstream English Language Training workgroup. Guidelines and suggestions are presented, in five chapters, for English Language Training (ELT) programs. Chapter one deals with the scope and design of particular ELT programs, taking into account the clients to be served, the needs of the service locale, and ways of prioritizing services. Chapter two suggests criteria for measuring the quality and effectiveness of programs, and chapter three describes procedures for monitoring and evaluating programs in relation to those criteria. Chapter four discusses ways to coordinate ELT programs with other elements of the service delivery system to ensure efficiency and economy through communication among teachers, case managers, job developers, and employers. Chapter five examines the costs of ELT programs and offers help to policymakers responsible for efficient allocation of resources. Appended materials include a set of descriptions stating what students should be able to accomplish with their language skills at various levels, a competency-based core curriculum guide that lists competencies in 5 topical areas for 10 levels of instruction; and a partial list of language proficiency tests. (Author/JL)
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GUIDELINES FOR ELT PROGRAMS

MELT WORK GROUP

DECEMBER 1988

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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GUIDELINES FOR ELT PROGRAMS

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PREFACE

This document is the result of contributions from a National Work Group organized under the auspices of the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Family Support Administration. The National MELT Work Group met once in Washington, D.C. and once in Colorado with smaller task forces meeting on two separate occasions. It was a tremendous challenge to write a document which would be useful to a wide range of audiences and be applicable and appropriate across states, whether urban or rural, large or small, and with ELT programs at all levels of sophistication.

Members of the MELT Work Group were chosen for their experience and leadership with ELT programs and the MELT Initiative, as well as for their knowledge and involvement in issues facing policy-makers regarding ELT programs. The group was composed of educators involved with English language training, Refugee State Coordinators, Representatives from the FSA Regional Offices, and the Central Office of Refugee Resettlement. Members of the National Work Group included:

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The Spring Institute for International Studies, through its MELT Technical Assistance Contract for Region VIII, facilitated the meetings of the Work Group and produced the final version of this document. The Institute owes much to the hard work, time, and substantive input contributed by every member of the Work Group. The Institute also gratefully acknowledges the leadership and active participation in the work group by Mr. Vo Van Ha, Project Officer from Region VIII, and Carmel Thompson, from the National Office of ORR. Much credit is also due to Kathy Do for the original design of the project, and for her contributions in the start-up phase and her leadership throughout the earlier phases of the MELT and VELT projects.

The five chapters are distilled from the experience of a wide range of leaders in language teaching and refugee services throughout the United States. Chapter I deals with the decisions to be made regarding the scope and design of an English language training program for a given community, taking into account the clients to be served, the needs of the service locale, and ways of prioritizing services. Chapter II suggests criteria to be used when measuring the quality and effectiveness of a program, and Chapter III describes procedures for monitoring and evaluating a program in relation to those criteria. Chapter IV discusses ways to coordinate the ELT program with other elements of the service delivery system, so as to ensure efficiency and economy, through communication among teachers, case managers, job developers, and employers. The document concludes with a consideration of the costs, as Chapter V offers help to policymakers responsible for efficient allocation of resources while purchasing needed services. In each chapter, selection of content has been guided by the question: how can the experience of the Work Group members best serve those entrusted with designing, guiding and financing ELT programs for refugees?

Since the development of the MELT products, many statewide systems and local programs have adapted them or developed their own curriculum, tests, and definitions of performance to meet their clients' needs and better to address the unique features of their competency-based programming.

CHAPTER I

IDENTIFYING THE SCOPE AND DESIGN OF LANGUAGE SERVICES

OVERVIEW

The design of an English Language Training (ELT) program should be based on the characteristics and needs of the potential clients. This chapter addresses the steps involved in identifying the scope and design of effective ELT programs to correspond most closely with the clients and the language skills they need for available jobs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **A survey should be conducted to identify the clients to be served and to assess their needs.**

The types of client information appropriately collected in a survey include:

- Demographic data
- Length of time in the United States
- Language background
- Level of English proficiency
- Public assistance status
- Employment history and current status

To complement the client survey, a survey of major industries and primary employers in the service locale will help to assess:

- Types of available jobs
- Language demands of the workplace

The survey instrument presented in the MELT Technical Assistance Package may be used or adapted to the local situation.

2. **Terms used to describe language proficiency should be clear, understandable to a general audience, and consistent with an accepted standard. The MELT Student Performance Levels (SPLs), or equally descriptive terms which are consistent with the SPLs, are recommended.**

The (SPLs) found in the MELT Document are general descriptions of adult students' language ability set at a range of levels. They provide a common standard for refugee ELT level descriptions and can be used by programs nationwide. They facilitate understanding of language abilities within a single ELT program as well as among ESL programs. The SPL Document provides a basis for communication

with providers of other services (e.g., resettlement, job placement) and with funding sources. Finally, they afford a basis for identifying the relationship between overseas and domestic refugee ELT program levels.

3. **A range of ELT services should be provided for a variety of client goals and community needs. Programs complementary to ELT, such as, Vocational English Language Training (VELT) and Adult Basic Education (ABE), should be identified and accessed.**

The program design should reflect outcomes that are specifically associated with the program's goals. Thus, where self-sufficiency is the goal in a program targeted to the unemployed or underemployed head-of-household, appropriate outcomes may include employment at a designated salary level or advancement within a specific period of time to that level. For homemakers and for non-literate older persons, the goal may be the ability to function in the community.

VELT, ABE and other programs complementary to ELT should be identified so that ELT programs are designed to accommodate the needs (e.g., hours and level of instruction) of a target population who may be simultaneously using these community resources.

4. **Priorities for services to be funded or clients to be served should be established based on Federal guidelines and State objectives.**

Priorities are set in part by determining whether programs will serve those clients with the lowest level of English proficiency, those most likely to be employed in jobs available in the community, or those meeting some other identified standard. A factor which should also be considered is the extent to which services are available in the community.

A related method of establishing service priority is to consider the priorities specified in the State plan and apply them to English language services. Groups to be targeted for service might, without reference to priority, include:

a. Employable adults receiving cash/medical assistance and resident less than 24 months.

b. Employable adults resident 0 - 6 months and in danger of seeking public cash/medical assistance.

c. Secondary wage earners receiving cash/medical assistance.

d. Secondary wage earners resident 0 - 6 months and in danger of seeking public cash/medical assistance.

e. Time-expired employable adults on cash/medical assistance.

f. Special needs populations, such as, homebound women, elderly, and youth.

g. All others who have not become naturalized citizens.

An alternative way of prioritizing services is to set a limit on the number of hours or length of time in the program. This method may ensure that some opportunity for ELT instruction will be available to the entire target population for whom lack of English is a barrier.

A variation on this method of prioritizing clients is to identify the proficiency level at which clients may be enrolled in ELT or the level at which clients must also be employed to be eligible for ELT.

If a limit is to be set on the length of time a client may spend in an ELT program, a review of the number of contact hours required on average to reach a certain proficiency level is helpful. The MELT Resource Package presents the following guidelines for estimating the ranges of contact hours required for clients to move from one (SPL) to another. The ranges of hours listed below represent the experience of 19 MELT demonstration sites. The table is intended to be used as a guideline for ELT programs that choose to adopt or adapt the MELT products. The table illustrates that individuals with virtually no English skills may require over 1,000 contact hours to reach Level VI English language proficiency.

Range of Contact Hours Required for Level Advancement

Gain in SPL Related to Listening Comprehension and Oral Communication	Number of Contact Hours
I to II	105 to 235
II to III	125 to 210
III to IV	120 to 210
IV to V	120 to 225
V to VI	120 to 225
VI to VII	120 to 225

Gains in language proficiency depend on conditions related to the local program and the individual student. The contact hour ranges

are also based on the assumption that certain conditions related to the teaching/learning environment exist. Interpretation of the contact hour ranges must, therefore, include a review of these conditions and the flexibility to institute adjustments, if necessary, to accommodate differences in conditions.

RESOURCES

- Appendix B: Student Performance Level (SPL) Document
- Appendix C: Assessing the Needs of Students, Community, and Program.
- MELT Resource Package. Appendix 111.5-111.7. Sample Needs Assessments.
- VELT Resource Package: Section Two: Vocational English Training Program, Key Components, Pp. 2-1 to 2-32.

CHAPTER II

IDENTIFYING INDICATORS OF PROGRAM QUALITY

OVERVIEW

This chapter deals with the elements of good ELT programs which help to ensure that programs meet the needs of the students served, are outcome based, and have goals consistent with State priorities. In the procurement, monitoring and evaluation stages, the elements listed below characterize programs in which the quality of instruction is high.

DESCRIPTION AND DISCUSSION

1. **Specific student outcomes are related to identified student needs, program goals, and State priorities.**

An important measure of program effectiveness is the percentage of participants who achieve the proposed student outcomes. These should be stated in terms of measurable performance, be achievable by the target population, and be consistent with the established program goals, objectives and State priorities. The following are examples of how the proposed student outcomes are related to student needs and State priorities:

Example 1:

State Priority Population:
Employable adult recipients of cash or medical assistance.

Student Needs:
75% of jobs in the local labor market require an ability to read written instructions.

Program Type:
Vocational ESL.

Proposed Student Outcome:
Clients will gain sufficient literacy skills to enable them to read written instructions related to the following jobs in the local labor market: (Enumerate available jobs and attach samples of written instructions for each).

Example 2:

State Priority Population:
Older Adults.

Student Needs:

To access the health care system and other support services by public transportation.

Program Type:
Survival English.

Proposed Student Outcome:
Clients will learn the language skills necessary to enable them to use public transportation.

2. Outcomes are expressed in the curriculum in terms of life-skills competencies.

As the outline of the instructional program, the curriculum provides the guidelines and framework for student outcomes. Each level of each component in a program design should have a separate curriculum, (e.g., Survival English 1, 2; Occupation-Specific English 1, 2, 3.)

If acquiring functional life skills is the intended program goal, an appropriate curriculum is one that is competency-based, focusing on demonstrated mastery of basic and life skills necessary for functioning capably in society.

In a competency-based curriculum, grammar is not taught in isolation, nor is it the rationale for sequencing lessons. Rather, the grammatical structures are those needed to demonstrate attainment of given competencies. The teacher focuses instruction on the language a student needs (e.g., to apply for a job, access the health care system, or report an emergency) and integrates the appropriate grammar skills into the content of the lesson. Where a life skills, competency-based curriculum is in place, it is recommended that the competencies be correlated with the SPL's. If such a curriculum is not in place, it is recommended that the Core Curriculum document from the MELT Project be adapted to develop a curriculum based on local needs.

3. Cross-cultural content is included in the curriculum.

Functioning effectively in the United States requires an understanding of American cultural norms, values and behaviors and their relation to one's native culture. An effective ELT program includes cultural content, both native and American.

4. If more than one level of instruction is offered, the program uses measures to assure accurate placement of students into appropriate levels.

Placement measures are administered at the time a student enters a program. To place students into appropriate levels of instruction, measurement must effectively discriminate individual students' abilities by local program level. Refugees' I-94 cards

indicate the level of instruction (A, B, C, D, or E) they have completed in the Department of State Refugee Training Program overseas. This level should be used only as one indicator since students were not individually tested on exit nor did they move from level to level in the camp program. Additionally, time and experience since leaving the processing center may also have significantly modified refugees' proficiency levels. Thus, it is important to reassess the proficiency level at the time of a student's entrance into the program. In the absence of another equally valid and reliable test, it is recommended that the Basic English Skills Test (B.E.S.T.) be used for placement. If a student is more proficient than is measureable with the B.E.S.T. (above SPL 7), other standardized tests may be used.*

5. **ELT programs consider the following conditions when determining the length of time needed to move from one level to the next.**

   a. **PROGRAM-RELATED CONDITIONS**

   - **Intensity of Instruction** -- If funding permits, programs should offer between 10 and 25 hours per week with at least three class sessions per week.

   - **Entry/Exit Procedures and Policies** -- where open-entry/open-exit policies exit, it may be necessary to extend the range of contact hours or establish procedures which accommodate mid-term admissions. In programs with definite starting and ending dates, the range of contact hours will be more definitive.

   - **Class Size** -- A maximum of 15 students per class for Levels I and II is recommended, while a maximum of 25 students per class is suggested for higher levels.

   - **Class Composition (Students)** -- Classes should be homogeneous in competency level. Multi-level classes may require more contact hours to compensate for the ranges of levels.

   - **Teachers** -- Teachers should be trained and supervised during the implementation of competency-based ELT curricula. It is desirable that teachers have an academic training in ESL or substantial experience and in-service training in using the methods and curricula appropriate for the target population. On-going staff development is necessary to operate a competency-based ELT program.

* (See Reviews of English Language Proficiency Tests, a TESOL publication by Alderson, Krahnke, Stansfield, and Appendix E for a brief description of some of the tests.)

- **Appropriate Curricula and Course material** -- Because there is a one-to-one relationship between the MELT Core Curriculum document and the SPL's, the local curriculum must be competency-based with the same or similar competencies and relationship to the SPL's as the MELT curriculum in order to move students from one Student Performance Level to the next within the recommended range of contact hours.

- **Testing and Assessment** -- Pre-determined testing and assessment procedures are necessary.

- **Auxiliary Services** -- Auxiliary services, such as child care and transportation, provided by the program or through linkages with other agencies, enhance the possibilities for regular attendance in ELT programs.

b. **STUDENT-RELATED CONDITIONS**

- **Age** -- Evidence suggests that contact hour requirements increase in direct proportion to increased age.

- **Education** -- Students with less education will typically require more contact hours than the stated range.

- **Native Language** -- Students whose native language uses a non-Roman alphabet may require more contact hours.

- **Native Language Literacy** -- Students who do not read or write their native language may require more contact hours.

- **Use of English Outside Class** -- Students who are isolated from English speakers may require more contact hours.

6. **The program provides a record of progress through pre-and post-assessment tests, which are appropriate, reliable, and valid.**

Pre- and post-assessments should be conducted in order to assess students' language skills, to identify what needs to be taught, to place students in the appropriate instructional levels, and to provide data to document progress from the time of entry to the time of completion. In many programs the placement measure and pre-assessment test are the same instrument. A test which is appropriate for pre- and post-assessment mirrors the objectives of the curriculum. A reliable test is one which is accurate in measuring consistently what it purports to measure. Validity refers to the degree to which a test is relevant and meaningful in measuring a particular competency or trait for a particular purpose and a particular examinee.

In determining language proficiency level, it is recommended that a test be used which is both appropriate to the needs of the target population and related to the proficiency levels. One such test is the B.E.S.T., which is a competency-based test developed specifically for the refugee population but which is appropriate for any adult ESL population. It is correlated to the SPLs.

7. **Procedures for monitoring student progress on a regular basis are in use.**

Progress is monitored to determine whether a student is ready to move on to the next level. Progress is recorded so as to document the attainment of competencies. Therefore, tests used for this purpose should measure the skills and competencies included in the local curriculum.

Teacher-made tests are appropriate for this purpose since they can be directly related to the content of the course. In a competency-based approach, students can demonstrate mastery by performing the tasks that have been taught.

8. **Program outcomes are measured by use of standard definitions of successful completion.**

Definitions of completion may include:

- Movement from one level to another.
- Attainment of a specific set of competencies.
- Completion of a certain number of levels.
- Attainment of a designated test score on a reliable and valid instrument.
- Movement into another program such as a vocational training program, which requires a higher level of English, or
- Getting and keeping a job.

9. **Materials appropriate to the teaching objectives and student needs are used.**

Emphasis should be placed on what a student can do with English rather than on what he/she knows about English. Thus, instructional materials should focus on life skills competencies. A single text is usually not sufficient to meet the needs of students in any one locale. Instead, teachers may draw from a variety of resources including the community itself. For example, to learn how to use public transportation, local bus schedules and maps may be used instead of, or in addition to, a text.

10. **Staff development activities are provided on a regular basis. A plan for addressing staff development needs is an essential component of all proposals and program planning.**

All staff need to acquire information on changing guidelines and requirements, new methods and materials, and program evaluation results. As staff turnovers occur, new staff must be oriented to the goals and objectives of the program and to specific job responsibilities.

Additional topics to cover in staff development might include:

- use of materials, including audio visual materials
- cultural information
- ways of teaching to the needs of the students and proposed student outcomes
- lesson planning
- time management
- monitoring progress

RESOURCES

- Appendix A: Sample pages from the Basic English Skills Test are included in the Appendix on Testing, Section IV of the MELT Resource Package.

- Appendix B: The Student Performance Level (SPL) Document. Also see Section 2, SPL Document, MELT Resource Package.

- Appendix C: Section 3, Core Curriculum. Also see Appendix III of the MELT Resource Package.

Chapter III

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

OVERVIEW

Monitoring and evaluation provide for systematic review and analysis of program implementation and are fundamental to the overall management plans of the funding agency and the contractor. The results of either activity may relate to various purposes, including:

- Facilitating program improvement
- Documenting the extent of goal achievement
- Determining and documenting cost effectiveness
- Future program planning and funding, and
- Determining ELT program impact on the target population and on the broader goals of resettlement

Although monitoring and evaluating are, from a conceptual standpoint, closely related functions, they are not identical. For the policymaker, the major emphasis will be on monitoring since more resources for this activity are available. Additionally, State and Federal regulations more often mandate monitoring while viewing evaluation as a discretionary activity. This chapter attempts to differentiate between these aspects of assessing programs and provides guidelines for both.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **A monitoring and evaluation plan should be a requirement in responding to an RFP or in developing contractual work plans.**

   The purpose of monitoring is to assess program performance against projected goals and standardized performance indicators. The monitor asks two fundamental questions: Is the project meeting its stated objectives, and is it in conformity with grant/contract requirements?

2. **Monitoring may consist of "desk" or "on-site" reviews.**

   Desk monitoring is an analysis based on review of program, fiscal, and statistical reports. Other aspects, including program management or program quality, require on-site monitoring and generally entail direct observation, review of case files, and examination of other internal records.

   Forms or instruments for collecting data should be developed. Those for use in on-site monitoring may be shared with the programs in advance of the visit.

3. **Policymakers should determine priorities for information required for reporting purposes relative to the target population, scope and design of language services, student outcomes, and cost considerations.**

Policymakers must weigh the benefit to be gained from program reporting against the costs associated with generating that information. Extensive information gathering may cut into service monies. Conversely, to the extent that reporting requirements are reduced, program monitoring may need to be intensified, thereby draining program budgets. Thus policymakers should establish reporting requirements after weighing the relative importance of:

- Federal, State, and local requirements
- information required to document program activity, program cost, and program outcomes
- The availability of time, staff, and/or funds

4. **The management plan of each funding office should specify vendor reporting requirements for the data to be collected and the frequency of reporting. The contractor has a responsibility for ensuring compliance with contract goals.**

Contractors should be required to establish procedures to review performance on a continuing basis. Questions which may be useful in the monitoring process include:

- Is the proposed target population the group which is actually being served? Needs to be served?
- Are the types of instruction and curriculum materials specified in the proposal being implemented in the classroom?
- Are there variances in instructional approaches for different target populations?
- Is there a process which builds upon language assessment results in determining client's needs for services?
- Is required documentation of program activity, cost, and outcomes being kept?

5. **Data should be collected for monitoring key aspects of the program: program performance, management and fiscal detail:**

a. Program performance

- Projected versus actual
- Unduplicated clients served
- Class size
- Testing (quantitative changes)

. Outcomes: completion and positive termination

b. Management

. Referral process/interagency coordination
. Client service planning (Employment Development Plan or EDP)
. Internal data collection
. External reporting: timeliness; data verification; (reliability and validity checks)
. Eligibility determinations: alien status, length of residency criteria, public aid status, etc., as applicable
. File documentation: case notes, address, social security number, etc.
. Staff qualifications:
. Staff development/training: proposed vs actual
. Supervision/staff performance review
. Staffing configuration: proposed vs actual

c. Fiscal Detail

. Proposed versus actual cost per enrollee
. Cost per contract hour
. Cost per level
. Cost per class
. Testing costs
. Outcome costs
. Proposed v. actual cost per successful completion
. Cost per positive termination (e.g., dropped out to take a job)

6. **The State Coordinator's Office should have overall responsibility for monitoring the project.**

When monitoring is performed by an outside source, the State Coordinator's Office should specify the monitoring objectives, type, and target sites. Documentation regarding the extent to which the stated goals and objectives were met should be incorporated into the final report.

7. **Program improvement should be a focus of the monitoring process.**

The monitor may require corrective action and/or provide for technical assistance where problems are identified.

* * * * * * * * *

8. **Evaluation should focus on: "Is the project effective?" or "What is the impact beyond the stated objective?"**

Evaluations may be done by the State or an independent party. The evaluation function should be used to obtain information which is beyond the scope of monitoring or which must be gathered independently of the funding source for reasons of potential bias.

9. **The purpose and intended audience of the evaluations should be identified and the evaluation format and content planned accordingly.**

The intended audiences for the evaluation report are usually policy and decision-makers at the local, State, regional, or Federal levels. The format in which the report is presented will, of necessity, differ for different audiences and purposes.

Evaluation may be formative and summative. Formative evaluations focus on the quality and process of service delivery. Summative evaluations are outcome-focused, usually with heavy emphasis on costs.

Consistent with the evaluation purpose, programs should collect and use data, such as student and instructor evaluations, follow-up surveys of former students, test results, and program outcomes. The primary use for evaluation results is in improving the quality of the services provided. The evaluation report can also be an effective tool in influencing decision-making at the State, regional and Federal levels.

External evaluations should be periodic and cover one or more areas of concern. Questions which might be included in the program evaluation plan:

- was the target population served?
- were programs effective in meeting their goals and objectives?
- were proposed client outcomes attained?
- were multiple funding sources used in providing services to clients?
- did programs collect the data needed to support their evaluation plans?
- were the services cost effective?
- did the ELT program contribute to the broader goals of the resettlement program?

RESOURCES

MELT Technical Assistance Package, particularly the MELT-TA Self-Evaluation Instruments for Programs (SEIP-ELT and SEIT-VELT).

Chapter IV

COORDINATING ELT AND OTHER RESOURCES

OVERVIEW

To ensure its effectiveness, English Language Training should be integrated into the service delivery system in such a way that it supports the goals of the self-sufficiency plan. To this end, there should be a clear assessment of all services available to refugees, both mainstream and ORR funded, and the interface of those services with refugee ELT programs. This chapter addresses methods for coordinating services and promoting communication among individuals who represent the various aspects of the service delivery system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **The scope and appropriateness of local resources, both mainstream and refugee-specific, should be assessed to determine how best to use available funds.**

   Since some aspects of ELT are available through mainstream resources (e.g., adult basic education programs, community colleges, vocational training programs, public schools, and volunteer programs), decisions are needed regarding the most appropriate mix of services, namely:

   a. Should ELT services be provided to targeted refugees using only refugee-specific funding?

   b. Should refugees be enrolled in mainstream ELT?

   c. Should ORR funding be used to support refugees in mainstream programs?

   d. Should a combination of these options be selected? For example, ORR funding may be used for refugee-specific ELT for Student Performance Levels I - IV,* or for those on public assistance who have been in the country less than 18 months, while refugees outside these categories might be referred to mainstream programs.

* See Appendix B.

As policymakers explore the various combinations, the goals of the mainstream programs should be examined to determine if they are consistent with the goals for the target population. Additionally, States may wish to examine how well a mainstream program can incorporate refugees for purposes of:

- Data collection
- Fiscal accountability
- Differentiation of clients
- Curriculum design
- Participation by mandated clients

2. **There should be a clear and well-defined relationship between employment, case management, and ELT services.**

If ELT services are to be an integral part of the service delivery system, Voluntary Agencies (VOLAGS), social services agencies, job developers and ELT providers should communicate regularly regarding changes in the incoming refugee population, potential employment opportunities and requirements, and any significant change in the refugee resettlement climate. This communication should enable ELT providers to adjust curriculum in a timely manner, to modify class structure, lesson plans, and methods, and to be better prepared for a changing student clientele. Additionally, procurement documents for ELT services should request a specific plan from applicants regarding communication and information-sharing with other significant agencies in their area.

3. **Standardized Student Performance Levels (SPL's) and the Basic English Skills Test (B.E.S.T.), or an equally valid and reliable assessment tool, should be used across the service delivery system to facilitate appropriate evaluation, service planning, referral, and job placement.**

Discussions among case managers, job developers, employers, and teachers regarding a client's goals and his readiness for specific employment will be better informed if consistent measures, such as the B.E.S.T. scores and the SPL descriptions for language, are used to describe the client's language abilities. This coordination may also help to avoid duplication of effort and prevent competition between agencies.

Technical assistance on standardized terminology, such as the SPL document, should be provided to case managers and employment service providers as well as ELT programs so that they will understand the terminology and can apply it appropriately.

4. **ELT providers should have input into the development and periodic review of client service plans.**

Effective coordination between the various components of the service delivery system requires a process for sharing information regarding language needs and progress, job search, health care needs, and related issues. ESL teachers who work with clients on a daily basis should provide up-to-date student progress assessments to employment service providers, using standardized language (e.g. SPL's) familiar to case managers and employment program staff.

5. **Where a client's English language proficiency has been identified as a significant barrier to employment, regular participation in appropriate ELT programs may be required for continued receipt of welfare benefits.**

Within the context of funding limitations and State/county welfare requirements, the State may wish to strengthen the relationship between participation in language training programs and continued eligibility for cash and medical assistance. If ELT is a state-mandated condition for receiving benefits, programs must be required to monitor attendance and to ensure that clients are receiving appropriate training.

RESOURCES

Appendix A: Melt Resource Package

Basic English Skills Test (B.E.S.T.) Manual. Correlations between the B.E.S.T. scores and SPL's are included for both listening and speaking skills and for literacy skills in the Testing Appendix Section IV.

Guidelines for curriculum development, sample needs assessments and lesson plans are included in Section 3 of the MELT Resources Package.

MELT Technical Assistance Resource Package

Workshop materials and activities for training case managers, job developers, and employers in the use of the SPL's, the Core Curriculum Document and the B.E.S.T. are included in the MELT-TA Resource Package.

MELT Technical Assistance Package

The MELT TA Package contains resource information and a workshop format for the design, contracting, monitoring, and evaluation of refugee language training programs. Also see The MELT- TA Self-Evaluation Instruments for Programs (SEIP-ELT and SEIP VELT).

CHAPTER V

CONSIDERING COSTS

OVERVIEW

The responsibility of the policymaker is to allocate resources efficiently when purchasing necessary services. The issue of cost permeates the entire process of planning, procurement, monitoring and evaluation. For the purpose of planning, the policymaker evaluates applicants' projected costs and selects the most cost effective and efficient applicants for funding. In order to monitor or evaluate programs effectively, the policymaker compares actual expenditures with the projections individually or system-wide.

Because each system has unique clients and programmatic design, this section assumes that the best approach to cost analysis is a process based on the system's historical data and is appropriate to the structure of the programs. While there are many ways of approaching and defining costs, a policymaker should evaluate models and adapt the one best fitted to the needs and circumstances of the State or locale.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **In constructing and managing ELT programs, policymakers should articulate clear definitions of allowable costs and assess program accomplishments on the basis of both process and outcome measures.**

In considering costs, two elements are critical: Types of cost and units of cost. For purposes of determining allowable costs, the policymaker should comply with State procurement procedures using established definitions of direct and indirect costs. These definitions should be made available to vendors in the procurement and contract development phases of the process.

The second element, units of cost, are measures of process or specific outcomes.

A process cost is generally a description of the service itself.

Examples of process cost measures are:

- cost per participant
- cost per class
- cost per contact hour of instruction
- cost per client per hour of instruction

Outcome costs relate to the products of the program.

Examples of outcome costs are:

- cost per positive termination
- cost per successful completion of a course
- cost per successful achievement of a designated benchmark

Policymakers must choose unit cost measures which are most appropriate for program planning, procuring, and monitoring. Criteria for selecting unit measures of cost are:

- The unit should be applicable across programs.
- There must be specific definitions for measures selected
- The unit must provide program accountability.
- The unit must be readily reported.

2. **A policymaker should develop a range of allowable process and outcome costs to be used in planning, procuring, and monitoring since absolutes have limited applicability.**

Examples of calculating formulas, requirements for using them and considerations in selecting a formula can be found in Appendix F. Process and outcome costs should be analyzed in order to provide an overall picture of actual costs.

Each system has a unique client population, goals, and service configurations. Therefore, each system should identify ranges of cost which are based on actual data from within the system.

The policymaker should use cost information to target levels of funding during the planning phase, to negotiate realistic contracts during the procurement phase, and to compare actual expenditures with projections during the monitoring phase.

Considerations in developing a cost range should include:

Factors Not Controllable by Vendor

- Community standards of wages and benefits
- Community standards of rent, utilities, and maintenance
- Level of ESL acquisition barriers within the targeted population

Factors Controllable by Vendor

- Size of client base to be served
- Staff qualifications and configuration

3. **Policymakers should encourage the use of mainstream funds to augment refugee specific dollars in the provision of ELT.**

Many agencies interested in and capable of providing English language training to refugees also receive funding from other sources, (e.g., school districts, community colleges, and private educational institutions). When other funding sources are present, a policymaker must ensure that the vendor's cost allocation system appropriately allocates both direct and indirect costs to the refugee funded program to ensure that refugee funding is not being used to cover costs of non-refugee programs.

The following elements should be identical for accounting and accountability purposes. Vendors should:

- Use the same factors in distinguishing direct and indirect costs across funding sources.
- Be required to pro-rate. Example:
  $40,000 = ORR
  $60,000 = Other sources
  40/60 split on direct and indirect costs
- Use the prorated formula described above as the basis of reimbursement across funding sources
- Use the same cost per unit of completion across funding sources
- Use the same outcome and process measures across funding sources. (e.g., definition of completion)

4. **Assess the available models of reimbursement. Choose that which best suits a program's administrative resources and the vendors used as well as that which promotes quality.**

Typically, policymakers choose one of two broad models of contracting for payment: actual cost reimbursement or performance-based reimbursement.

a. Actual Cost Reimbursement: Based on a negotiated line item budget, vendors submit monthly or quarterly statements of expenditures, usually in line item form. After review of appropriate support documentation, and if expenditures do not exceed the agreed upon budget, payment is made. Some funders allow an average of 10-15% on any given line item as a margin for budget management, as long as the aggregate expenditures for the reporting period are within budget and the cumulative year-to-date expenditures are following projections.

As with any method of contracting, the cost reimbursement model has advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages:

- Makes regular cash flow available to the vendors. This is

particularly important for small organizations, such as MAAs, VOLAGs or small public institutions.

- May provide advances for program start-up to be recouped in the latter part of the fiscal year. This is an advantage for small organizations.

- Provides full accountability of how program dollars are spent, including some knowledge of program design (e.g., staffing pattern).

- Can provide an incentive to agencies to serve a population of "difficult clients".

- Does not promote "creaming" from among clients if the program targets a heterogeneous population.

Disadvantages:

- Payments are tied to process rather than outcome.

- There is difficulty in adjusting the funding level commensurate with reductions or changes in the client base.

- If a program proves unworkable or unproductive, it is more difficult to implement timely contract termination and thus salvage resources.

- A greater commitment of resources to fiscal administration is required - both on the part of the funder and the vendor.

b. Performance-Based Contracting: Based on a comprehensive program plan and a detailed analysis of all costs involved in operating the program, concrete outcomes are negotiated and a unit price established. A maximum reimbursement level (i.e., total face value of the contract) is established as well.

Benchmarks for program phases and outcomes are determined with clear delineations of reimbursement upon achievement. A representative sample of agreements reached might include:

- Contract period: July 1, 1988 - June 30, 1989
- 200 clients to be enrolled in Course A
- 160 clients to complete Course A (80%) successfully
- Negotiated Unit Reimbursement per enrollment in Course A = $80.00
- Negotiated Unit Reimbursement per completion of Course A = $400.00
- Maximum Level of Reimbursement for Course A = $96,000
- Payment Schedule = up to 20% of contract value upon enrollment of 200 clients ($19,200) or appropriate pro-

rata at agreed upon date of termination of enrollment (8/31/88); up to 80% of contract value upon successful client completions ($76,800) or the appropriate pro-rata at agreed upon date of program termination (6/30-89).

.Up to $19,200 or 20% of the face value of the contract may be provided as forward funding as of 7/1/88. This amount will be recouped as follows: 20% ($3,800) against enrollment reimbursement and 80% ($15,360) against client completion reimbursement at any time prior to 60 days of contract closure (4/30/89).

Again there are advantages and disadvantages to the Performance-Based model:

Advantages:

- Dollars are tied to concrete outcomes.
- Renegotiation of contracts is reasonably timely if changes occur in the client base.
- Advances may be provided for program start-up and recouped in the latter part of the fiscal year--is a must for small organizations.

Disadvantages:

- Irregular cash flow and the risk of losing money due to failure to perform may dissuade smaller or "newer" organizations from service provision.
- There is little accountability of how program dollars are spent.
- The model discourages services to the comprehensive client base and to "difficult" clients since the model promotes "creaming".
- Little insight into the quality of service is given.
- The provision of appropriate support services is discouraged.
- No opportunity to assess program shortcomings and provide technical assistance and/or corrective action is provided. (For instance, high staff turn-over is apparent.)

EDITOR'S EPILOGUE

This document represents the collective experience and thinking of the MELT Work Group regarding effective ways of teaching English to refugees and of making the ELT program a partner in a comprehensive service delivery network. Although many of the items in this document speak directly to the program configurations amd priorities of the refugee program, the members of the Work Group feel that most of the ELT program content guidelines will be appropriate for any quality ELT program for adults, whether for refugees, immigrants, aliens newly legalized under the amnesty program, or other adult learners of English.

Clearly, the most important goal of an ELT program is to enable the students to learn the English they need to aid in building successful lives. Students have been learning under many different methods with a wide variety of instructors, and this will undoubtedly continue to be the case. These guidelines are not presented as definitive but are intended to aid policymakers, program administrators, and service providers in their continuing efforts to be effective in helping refugees to help themselves.

Spring Institute for International Studies

Myrna Ann Adkins

Barbara J. Sample

APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF THE MELT RESOURCE PACKAGE

The MELT Resource Package

The MELT Resource Package is designed to be utilized as a whole or in part by a wide range of programs and service providers.

1. Student Performance Levels

The SPL document is a set of descriptions stating what students should be able to accomplish with their language skills at ten different levels. Each level is described in terms of a student's listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills; ability to communicate with a native speaker; and readiness for employment. The descriptions do not rely on technical language and are hence comprehensible by non-ESL professionals. The SPL Section of the MELT Resource Package includes, in addition to the document itself, a pronunciation rating scale, a range of contact hours needed for level changes, and student and program-related conditions which affect level gain.

The SPL Document is an integral part of the MELT Resource Package. The SPL's are correlated to Core Curriculum Instructional Levels and the B.E.S.T. score ranges. Use of the SPL Document is not, however, dependent on the total MELT Resource Package. Anyone needing to describe or better understand a student's language proficiency may find the materials useful.

See Appendix B for the complete SPL Document.

2. Core Curriculum Guide

The Core Curriculum Guide is "competency-based". A competency is defined as a demonstrated ability to perform a life-skills task using language. The Curriculum document lists competencies in eight topical and seven cross-topical areas for seven levels of instruction. These instructional levels correlate to the first seven of the Student Performance Levels and represent the life skills competencies needed to attain self-sufficiency.

In addition to the Core Curriculum Guide itself, the Curriculum Section of the MELT Resource Package includes examples and guidelines for developing and adapting curriculum to meet local program needs and goals.

The Core Curriculum Section, like the SPL Section, is an integral part of the MELT Resource Package, yet it may be used independently. It is intended to provide guidelines and assistance in competency-based ELT curriculum development and should be adapted to local program needs and goals.

3. Basic English Skills Test (B.E.S.T.)

The B.E.S.T. is a test of elementary listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. It is intended for use with limited-English-speaking adults for whom information on the attainment of basic functional language skills is needed. The test consists of two sections: a Core section and a Literacy Skills section.

The Core section of the B.E.S.T. is an individually administered interview which requires 15 to 20 minutes per person. It includes real-life tasks which require listening and speaking, such as handling money, following directions, telling time, and conversing socially. Also, reading sight words and completing a short biographical data form together serve as a screening device to identify students for whom the Literacy section would be appropriate. Pronunciation is evaluated throughout the administration of the Core section, and a global rating is given.

The Literacy section, which may be administered either individually or on a group basis, presents a variety of reading tasks ranging from recognizing dates on the calendar and understanding food and clothing labels to reading bulletin announcements and newspaper want-ads. Writing tasks range from addressing an envelope and writing a rent check to filling out an application form and writing a short passage on a biographical topic. Testing time for the Literacy section is one hour.

The B.E.S.T. is designed to provide useful information in three basic areas:

(1) evaluating the extent and nature of student's English language proficiency on entry into language training courses, for purposes of appropriate class placement or for planning individualized learning activities best suited to a given student.

(2) determining the progress of individual students, or the class as a whole, in developing functional proficiency in English with respect to the types of "survival" and prevocational language-use situations represented in the test.

(3) providing diagnostic feedback concerning students' acquisition or lack of acquisition of each of the particular language-use tasks included in the test (for example, telling time, dealing with money, etc.). This information may be used for overall course planning or individual remedial instruction.

APPENDIX B

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVEL DOCUMENT INCLUDING THE ABBREVIATED VERSION

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS

GENERAL LANGUAGE ABILITY	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	ORAL COMMUNICATION	READING	WRITING	B.E.S.T. SCORE
0 No ability whatsoever.	No ability whatsoever.	No ability whatsoever.	No ability whatsoever.	No ability whatsoever.	0-8
I • Functions minimally, if at all, in English. • Can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral communication, and in which all tasks can be easily demonstrated. • A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers can rarely communicate with a person at this level except through gestures.	• Understands only a few isolated words, and extremely simple learned phrases. (What's your name?)	• Vocabulary limited to a few isolated words. • No control of grammar.	• Recognizes most letters of the alphabet, and single-digit numbers.	• Copies letters of the alphabet, numbers, own name and address; needs assistance.	9-15

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS

GENERAL LANGUAGE ABILITY	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	ORAL COMMUNICATION	READING	WRITING	B.E.S.T. SCORE
II • Functions in a very limited way in situations related to immediate needs. • Can handle only routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral communication, and in which all tasks can be easily demonstrated. • A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have great difficulty communicating with a person at this level.	• Understands a limited number of very simple learned phrases, spoken slowly with frequent repetitions.	• Expresses a limited number of immediate survival needs using very simple learned phrases. • Asks and responds to very simple learned questions. • Some control of very basic grammar.	• Recognizes letters of the alphabet, numbers 1-100, and a few very common sight words (e.g. name, address, stop).	• Writes letters of the alphabet, numbers 1-100, very basic personal info. on simplified forms; needs assistance.	16-28

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS

GENERAL LANGUAGE ABILITY	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	ORAL COMMUNICATION	READING	WRITING	B.E.S.T. SCORE
III • Functions with some difficulty in situations related to immediate needs. • Can handle routine entry-level jobs that involve only the most basic oral communication, and in which all tasks can be demonstrated. • A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have great difficulty communicating with a person at this level.	• Understands simple learned phrases, spoken slowly with frequent repetitions.	• Expresses immediate survival needs using simple learned phrases. • Asks and responds to simple learned questions. • Some control of very basic grammar.	• Reads and understands a limited number of common sight words, and short, simple learned phrases related to immediate needs.	• Writes a limited number of very common words, and basic personal info. on simplified forms; needs assistance.	29-41

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS

GENERAL LANGUAGE ABILITY	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	ORAL COMMUNICATION	READING	WRITING	B.E.S.T. SCORE
IV • Can satisfy basic survival needs and a few very routine social demands. • Can handle entry-level jobs that involve some simple oral communication, but in which tasks can also be demonstrated. • A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have difficulty communicating with a person at this level.	• Understands simple learned phrases easily, and some simple new phrases containing familiar vocabulary, spoken slowly with frequent repetitions.	• Expresses basic survival needs, including asking and responding to related questions, using both learned and a limited number of new phrases. • Participates in basic conversations in a few very routine social situations (e.g. greeting, inviting). • Speaks with hesitation and frequent pauses. • Some control of basic grammar.	• Reads and understands simple learned sentences and some new sentences related to immediate needs; frequent misinterpretations.	• Writes common words and simple phrases related to immediate needs; makes frequent errors and needs assistance.	42-50

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS

GENERAL LANGUAGE ABILITY	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	ORAL COMMUNICATION	READING	WRITING	B.E.S.T. SCORE
V • Can satisfy basic survival needs and some limited social demands. • Can handle jobs and job training that involve following simple oral and very basic written instructions but in which most tasks can also be demonstrated. • A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have some difficulty communicating with a person at this level.	• Understands learned phrases easily and short new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly with repetition. • Has limited ability to understand on the telephone.	• Functions independently in most face-to-face basic survival situations but needs some help. • Asks and responds to direct questions on familiar and some unfamiliar subjects. • Still relies on learned phrases but also uses new phrases (i.e. speaks with some creativity) but with hesitation and pauses. • Communicates on the phone to express a limited number of survival needs, but with some difficulty. • Participates in basic conversations in a limited number of social situations. • Can occasionally clarify general meaning by simple rewording. • Increasing, but inconsistent, control of basic grammer.	• Reads and understands some short simplified materials related to basic needs with some misinterpretations.	• Writes phrases and some short, simple sentences; completes simplified forms. • Makes some errors; needs assistance.	51-57

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS

GENERAL LANGUAGE ABILITY	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	ORAL COMMUNICATION	READING	WRITING	B.E.S.T. SCORE
VI • Can satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands. • Can handle jobs and job training that involve following simple oral and written instructions and diagrams. • A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers will be able to communicate with a person at this level on familiar topics, but with difficulty and some effort.	• Understands conversations containing some unfamiliar vocabulary on many everyday subjects, with a need for repetition, rewording or slower speech. • Has some ability to understand without face-to-face contact (e.g. on the telephone, TV)	• Functions independently in most survival situations, but needs some help. • Relies less on learned phrases; speaks with creativity, but with hestitation. • Communicates on the phone on familiar subjects, but with some difficulty. • Participates with some confidence in social situations when addressed directly. • Can sometimes clarify general meaning by rewording. • Control of basic grammar evident, but inconsistent; may attempt to use more difficult grammar but with almost no control.	• Reads and understands simplified materials on familiar subjects. • May attempt to read some non-simplified materials (e.g. a notice from gas company), but needs a great deal of assistance.	• Performs basic writing tasks in a familiar context including short personal notes and letters (e.g. to a teacher or landlord). • Makes some errors; may need assistance.	58-64

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS

GENERAL LANGUAGE ABILITY	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	ORAL COMMUNICATION	READING	WRITING	B.E.S.T. SCORE
VII • Can satisfy survival needs and routine work and social demands. • Can handle work that involves following oral and simple written instructions in familiar and some unfamiliar situations. • A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers can generally communicate with a person at this level on familiar topics.	• Understands conversations on most everyday subjects at normal speed when addressed directly; may need repetition, rewording, or slower speech. • Understands routine work-related conversations. • Increasing ability to understand without face-to-face contact (telephone, TV, radio). • Has difficulty following conversation between native speakers.	• Functions independently in survival and many social and work situations, but may need help occasionally. • Communicates on the phone on familiar subjects. • Expands on basic ideas in conversation, but still speaks with hestitation while searching for appropriate vocabulary and grammar. • Clarifies general meaning easily, and can sometimes convey exact meaning. • Controls basic grammar, but not more difficult grammar.	• Reads and partially understands some non-simplified materials on everyday subjects; needs assistance.	• Performs routine writing tasks within a familiar context. • Makes some errors; may need assistance.	65+

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS

	GENERAL LANGUAGE ABILITY	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	ORAL COMMUNICATION	READING	WRITING	B.E.S.T. SCORE
VIII	• Can participate effectively in social and familiar work situations. • A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers can communicate with a person at this level on almost all topics.	• Understands general conversation and conversation on technical subjects in own field. • Understands without face-to-face contact (telephone, TV, radio); may have difficulty following rapid or colloquial speech. • Understands most conversation between native speakers; may miss details if speech is very rapid or colloquial or if subject is unfamiliar.	• Participates effectively in practical and social conversation and in technical discussions in own field. • Speaks fluently in both familiar and unfamiliar situations; can handle problem situations. • Conveys and explains exact meaning of complex ideas. • Good control of grammar.	• Reads and understands most non-simplified materials including materials in own field.	• Performs writing tasks with reasonable accuracy to meet social and basic work needs	
IX	• Can participate fluently and accurately in practical, social, and work situations. • A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers can communicate easily with a person at this level.	• Understands almost all speech in any context. Occasionally confused by highly colloquial or regional speech.	• Approximates a native speaker's fluency and ability to convey own ideas precisely, even in unfamiliar situations. • Speaks without effort. • Excellent control of grammar with no apparent patterns of weakness.	• Reads non-simplified materials.	• Approximates a native speaker's ability to write accurately.	
X	• Ability equal to that of a native speaker of the same socio-economic level.	• Equal to that of a native speaker of the same socio-economic level.	• Equal to that of a native speaker of the same socio-economic level.	• Equal to that of a native speaker of the same socio-economic level.	• Equal to that of a native speaker of the same socio-economic level.	

PRONUNCIATION: GLOBAL RATING

Speech is almost always unintelligible.	0
Speech is frequently not comprehensible.	1
Speech is generally understandable, but occasionally difficult or impossible to comprehend as a result of pronunciation problems.	2
Speech is readily understandable (from a pronunciation standpoint).	3

STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS — ABBREVIATED VERSION

0	No ability whatsoever.		
I	• Functions minimally, if at all, in English.	• Can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral communication, and in which all tasks can be easily demonstrated.	• A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers can rarely communicate with a person at this level except through gestures.
II	• Functions in a very limited way in situations related to immediate needs.	• Can handle only routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral communication, and in which all tasks can be easily demonstrated.	• A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have great difficulty communicating with a person at this level.
III	• Functions with some difficulty in situations related to immediate needs.	• Can handle routine entry-level jobs that involve only the most basic oral communication, and in which all tasks can be demonstrated.	• A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have great difficulty communicating with a person at this level.
IV	• Can satisfy basic survival needs and a few very routine social demands.	• Can handle entry-level jobs that involve some simple oral communication, but in which tasks can also be demonstrated.	• A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have difficulty communicating with a person at this level.
V	• Can satisfy basic survival needs and some limited social demands.	• Can handle jobs and job training that involve following simple oral and very basic written instructions but in which most tasks can also be demonstrated.	• A native English speaker used to dealing with limited English speakers will have some difficulty communicating with a person at this level.

VI	• Can satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands.	• Can handle jobs and job training that involve following simple oral and written instructions and diagrams.	• A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers will be able to communicate with a person at this level on familiar topics, but with difficulty and some effort.
VII	• Can satisfy survival needs and routine work and social demands.	• Can handle work that involves following oral and simple written instructions in familiar and some unfamiliar situations.	• A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers can generally communicate with a person at this level on familiar topics.
VIII	• Can participate effectively in social and familiar work situations.		• A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers can communicate with a person at this level on almost all topics.
IX	• Can participate fluently and accurately in practical, social, and work situations.		• A native English speaker not used to dealing with limited English speakers can communicate easily with a person at this level.
X	• Ability equal to that of a native speaker of the same socio-economic level.		

APPENDIX C

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND ADAPTATION

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN A COMPETENCY-BASED ELT PROGRAM

Instructional content in a competency-based ELT program focuses on the application of basic language skills to life skills competencies as determined by an assessment of the learner's needs, goals, and abilities. In addition, characteristics unique to local education programs and communities affect the development and implementation of a curriculum. Before an ELT program develops a curriculum, it should identify those characteristics unique to the local students, community, and program.

Listed below are general questions to assist a program in specifying its individual characteristics.

Students

- What is the population to be served? (Numbers, educational background, ethnicity, etc.)
- What are the goals of the student population? (Employment, vocational training, GED, etc.)
- What are the current abilities of the student population? (Language skills, technical skills)

Community

- What are the characteristics of the community? (City, small town, rural; multi-ethnic/multi-lingual, etc.)
- What is the local job market? (Unemployment rate, types of jobs available, salary levels, etc.)

Program

- What are the program's goals? (Finding immediate employment for students, preparing students for entry into vocational skills training, preparing students for general self-sufficiency in the community, etc.)
- What services are the program funded to provide? (General ESL, VESL, cultural orientation, job development, etc.)
- What is the program organization?

  Intensity and scheduling of the classes? (3 hours, 1 time per week for 12 weeks, etc.)

  Entry/exit criteria? (open/closed intake, completion schedule)

  Number of instructional levels? (2,3, etc.)

  Class size? (20, 15, etc.)

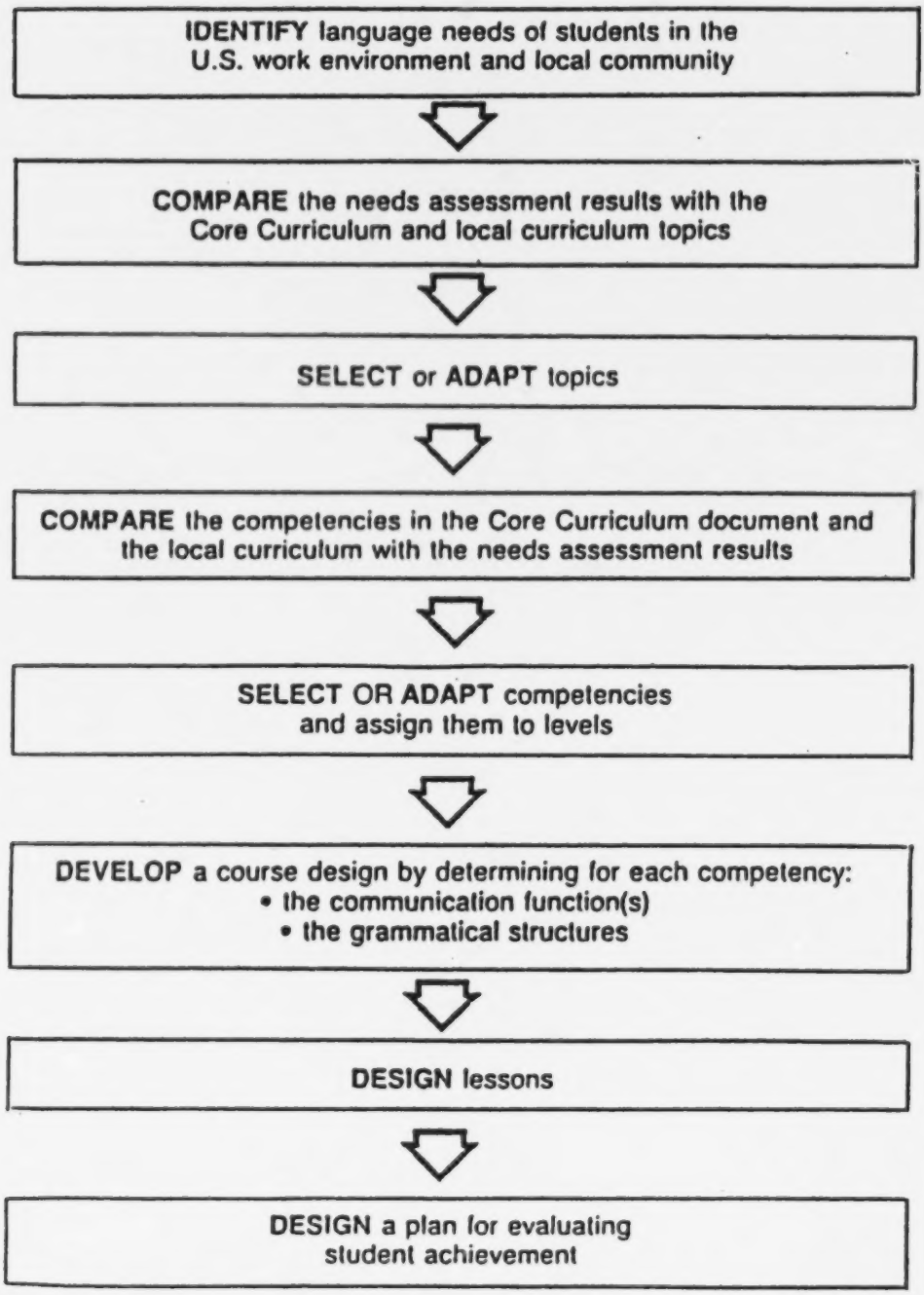
  Facilities and equipment? (classroom space, books, tape recorders, etc.)
- What is the staffing pattern? (Curriculum specialists, full-time teaching positions, administrative positions, etc.)
- Who are the teaching staff? (Trained and experienced ESL teachers, bilingual aides, volunteers, etc.)
- On what outcomes is the program evaluated? (Number of job placements, number of clients successfully completing a level, etc.)

Answering these questions will identify the program characteristics and assist in determining the focus, scope, and content of the local curriculum.

*Taken from MELT Resource Package, pages 21, 22

CHART A:

Curriculum Development/Adaptation Process


IDENTIFY language needs of students in the U.S. work environment and local community
COMPARE the needs assessment results with the Core Curriculum and local curriculum topics
SELECT or ADAPT topics
COMPARE the competencies in the Core Curriculum document and the local curriculum with the needs assessment results
SELECT OR ADAPT competencies and assign them to levels
DEVELOP a course design by determining for each competency:
• the communication function(s)
• the grammatical structures
DESIGN lessons
DESIGN a plan for evaluating student achievement

*Taken from MELT Resource Package, page 24

APPENDIX D

SELECTING AND/OR DEVELOPING ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

STUDENT ASSESSMENT IN A COMPETENCY-BASED ELT PROGRAM

One of the advantages of using a competency-based approach to language teaching is that assessment is built-in. The task of assessing what the students have learned is based on previously specified real-life competency objectives. Testing instruments for placement and achievement directly relate to the curriculum in the local instructional program.

Selecting and/or Developing Assessment Instruments

Competency-based ELT programs for refugees focus on the teaching of life skills and on the basic language skills necessary to perform the life skills. Commercially available ESL language tests may be reliable and valid for testing basic language skills but may not relate directly to the local program's curriculum. Life skills tests* appropriate for adult refugees are not readily available or may not be directly related to an ELT program's curriculum. Thus, in developing an assessment system for an ELT program, the local program will need to select and/or develop tests that are appropriate to competency-based ELT curricula and more specifically to the local program's ELT curriculum.

In order to accomplish this task, decisions will have to be made as to:

1. The criteria for movement or advancement within and exit from the local programs:
   - attainment of competencies
   - attainment of key competencies for a specific level
   - a determined score on a test or tests
   - communicative ability
   - instructor's subjective judgment
   - a combination of two or more of the above factors
2. The test(s) content:
   - attainment of competencies
   - aural/oral skills (communicative ability, pronunciation)
   - literacy/reading/writing skills
   - grammatical structures
   - a combination of two or more of the above factors
3. Time and staffing constraints affecting the assessment process:
   - length of the test
   - method of testing: paper and pencil, oral interview, applied performance/ task demonstration, instructor observation, combination of methods
   - test administration
4. Required recordkeeping:
   - test scores
   - competency check lists
   - student/class profiles
   - a combination of two or more of the above
5. Feedback provided (how and to whom):
   - students
   - administrators
   - funding agency
   - community

These local ELT program decisions assist in determining what testing instrument should be used and when. Usually a combination of commercially and locally produced tests is found to be the most appropriate.

*Taken from MELT Resource Package, pages 31, 32

APPENDIX E

PARTIAL LIST OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TESTS

Partial List of Language Proficiency Tests

Following is a partial list of tests which are currently available in addition to the B.E.S.T. and which could be used to determine language proficiency level. The list includes the name of the test; the publisher, and a brief description. Two other resources which list ESL language tests are the MELT Resource Package and Review of English Language Proficiency Tests, a TESOL publication by Alderson, Krahnke and Stansfield. The latter resource includes an extensive description and evaluation of each test dealth with in the book.

Test	Publisher	Description
Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)	California Department of Education	Can be used as a placement, diagnostic, achievement, or certification test. Skills tested include life skills and prevocational skills in the context of reading and listening. There are multiple forms with score ranges correlated to SPL I-VII.
English Language Skills Assessment (ELSA)	Newbury House	Designed to measure reading ability for placement. The test can also be used to measure pre-post-test gain. There are three levels of difficulty with two forms at each level. Test is easy to administer and takes 25 to 30 minutes.
English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA)	Literacy Volunteer of America	Can be used as a placement, diagnostic, and progress test. It is divided into four levels which indicate oral/aural proficiency in following directions and using specific English patterns and basic vocabulary.
HELP Test	Alemany Press	A screening instrument for students with very basic English skills to identify literacy and oral levels and to facilitate placement. Individually administered with no time limit. Scoring is based on communication rather than grammatical corrections.
Ilyin Oral Interview	Newbury House, Harper and Row	Designed to assess English oral proficiency for diagnostic purposes. Scores correspond to five levels. There are three forms. Individual administration takes 5 to 30 minutes.
John/Fred Test	Language Innovations, Inc.	An oral placement test which tests answering questions, asking questions and producing connected discourse. There are two forms (John and Fred) plus a short version of the John Test. Individual administration takes 10 to 15 minutes.
Secondary Level English Proficiency Test (SLEP)	Educational Testing Service	Measures comprehension of spoken and written English designed for grades 7-12. Two forms group administration takes 85 minutes.
Structure Tests - English Language (STEL)	Harper and Row	Measure knowledge of English structure and vocabulary. Corelated to six placement levels with two forms per level. Group administration takes 30 minutes.

APPENDIX F

TYPES OF COST FORMULAS

RESOURCE A: TYPES OF COST FORMULAS

FORMULA	EXAMPLE	REQUIREMENTS	CONSIDERATIONS
Cost per Participant	100 participants are enrolled in a program funded for $100,000 Cost: $100,000/ 100/= $1,000	. Identification of total costs . Accurate proration of indirect costs	Comparison of cost among programs can be difficult with this formula because services offered differ in number and scope; clients may be enrolled for different lengths of time among programs, and some services cost more than others.
Cost per Class	Twenty different classes are provided by a program funded at $100,000 per year $100,000/20 = $5,000	. Established starting and ending dates for classes . Identification of total costs . Accurate proration of indirect costs.	Classes can vary by intensity and number of contact hours. For example, a General Purpose ESL class may meet 20 hours a week for 24 weeks while a VESL class may meet 6 hours a week for 12 weeks. A course may vary in the number of contact hours depending upon the type of student enrolled. For example, A General Purpose, Level One class may have 120 contact hours when the students are literate but have 300 contact hours when the students are nonliterate.
Cost per Contact Hour	A program funded at $100,000 per year provides 5,000 contact hours. $100,000/5000 = $20.00 per contact hour	. Uniform definition of contact hours . Accurate calculation of contact hours for the year . Identification of total costs . Accurate proration of indirect costs.	"Contact hour" can be defined in different ways-50 minutes, 55 minutes, 60 minutes, etc. Holidays, staff vacations and unexpected circumstances can effect the number of contact hours.
Cost per Client per Contact Hour	Ten students regularly attend a class which costs $20.00 per contact hour. $20.00/10 = $2.00 per client per hour	. Average student attendance is used. . Cost per contact hour is accurate. . Total costs . Identification of accurate proration of indirect costs.	Some classes require a smaller enrollment, such as literacy classes and Occupational Specific VESL. Classes with large enrollments may appear to be more cost effective, but student learning may be limited due to the large number of students. If actual attendance per hour is used in the calculation instead of average daily attendance, a lot of administrative time is needed.

Linda Mrowicki. Adapted from handouts for ORR Region I consultation.

RESOURCE A: TYPES OF COST FORMULAS

FORMULA	EXAMPLE	REQUIREMENTS	CONSIDERATIONS
Cost per Successful Program Completion	100 clients are enrolled in a program which is funded at $100,000. 50 clients complete the program successfully. $100,000/50 = $2,000	. Standard definitions for program completion . Identification of total costs . Accurate proration of indirect costs	Programs may be using different definitions for successful completion. Programs may offer different types, levels, and intensity of instruction. Certain segments of the client population, such as the nonliterate, less educated, will need more services in order to complete the program, hence, the costs will be higher. Completion of all levels rather than job placement may be encouraged.
Cost per Successful Completion of a Group	10 students are enrolled in a VESL class. 8 successful complete the class. The class costs $5000. $5,000/8 = $625	. Standard definitions for course completion. . Identification of total costs . Accurate proration of indirect costs . No fault drop-outs defined.	The success of entry/exit classes are more difficult to evaluate than the success of "closed" classes. Certain populations, such as nonliterate students, may require more services before attaining success.
Cost per Successful Achievement of a Benchmark	100 clients are enrolled in a program which costs $100,000 per year. 80 students gain 1 SPL in 6 months $50,000/80 = $625	. Standard definitions for benchmarks. . Regular assessment of student progress. . Identification of total costs. . Accurate proration of indirect costs. . No fault drop outs defined.	Recording progress will be more complex if class assessment is done on an ongoing basis. Open entry/exit programs may measure progress on an ongoing basis rather than at regularly established points in time.

Linda Mrowicki. Adapted from handouts for ORR Region I consultation.

APPENDIX G

STEPS IN DETERMINING COSTS

Steps in Determining Costs*

Step One: Obtain cost data from all previous vendors for a period of not less than two years.

Step Two: Obtain cost data from similar programs, such as Adult Education/ESL or Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).

Step Three: Compute as many units of cost as possible.

Step Four: Calculate the median, mean, and mode. These calculations indicate clusters of costs.

Step Five: Examine the high and low ranges and identify possible explanations for the high or low costs. Some factors may include:

- use of professional, full time staff against volunteers or part time staff.
- higher operating costs in major urban areas.
- unionized salary structures in school districts vs. non-union community based agencies.
- greater costs for instructional supplies in new programs vs. continuing programs.

Step Six: Establish a range which appears fair and appropriate.

Step Seven: Evaluate the applicants' costs to ensure that they fall within the established ranges. If they exceed or fall below the range, review the applicants' justification.

Step Eight: Analyze the costs in relation to the specific policies for the types of instruction, the priority of clients to be served, and the outcomes.

Step Nine: Review the applicant's proposals to ensure that the applicants have the necessary infrastructure resources to manage the program and provide full and reliable accountability.

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*Developed by Pamela Seubert and Linda Mrowicki